

NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VOLUNTEERS KICK OFF PLANTING SEASON AT INDY URBAN ACRES

Produce planted will benefit Hoosier families in need

INDIANAPOLIS – Fruits and vegetables planted today at Indy Urban Acres organic farm will give Hoosier families in need a healthy food alternative at harvest time. Indy Urban Acres is a unique partnership between the City of Indianapolis Parks and Recreation Department, Indiana University Health and the Indianapolis Parks Foundation to provide fresh produce to Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana. Today, student volunteers from IUPUI lent a helping hand to kick off the planting season.

“Indy Urban Acres has the potential to help feed hungry families, encourage healthy living and combat obesity and diabetes,” said Mayor Greg Ballard. “Thanks to our great partnership with IU Health and the Indianapolis Parks Foundation, the farm has grown to be a sustainable, usable space that connects neighbors to build healthier lives together.”

This year, volunteers under the management of the Indy Urban Acres farm manager will plant fruits and vegetables on an eight-acre farm at 7700 E. 21st St. The produce will be harvested, washed and picked up by a Gleaners food truck to be delivered to the distribution center to help alleviate “food deserts,” or areas where people do not have access to fresh food.

“Far too many Hoosiers don’t have convenient access to healthy foods,” said Ron Stiver, senior vice president of Engagement and Public Affairs, IU Health. “Indy Urban Acres is designed to help change this. In 2011, 1,200 pounds of nutritious fruits and vegetables were harvested and distributed to some of our most vulnerable Hoosier families, and we expect even more to be distributed in 2012 and years to come.”

“Gleaners is proud to partner with IU Health, Indy Parks and the Indianapolis Parks Foundation to be able to provide healthy, fresh produce to families, children, and seniors in need,” said Cindy Hubert, President & CEO of Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana. “Fresh, healthy foods can be difficult to come by for our most vulnerable citizens, and the Indy Urban Acres farm is a wonderful way to help bridge that gap.”

IUPUI volunteers planted peach, apple, pear and cherry trees in the orchard section of the urban farm and assisted in assembling raised beds for additional crops.

For more information about volunteer opportunities please call (317) 327-PARK or visit www.indy.gov/parks.

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